

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6009

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USDEL ALEXANDRIA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS BEIRUT 10969

USIA FOR IOP/M, IPS, IBS, INA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, XF, EG, IS

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION- NEW INTERIM AGREEMENT IN SINAI

1. SUMMARY. COMPARING NEW SINAI ACCORD TO CZECH ARMS DEAL IN SIGNIFICANCE FOR REGION, LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR" AND LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR" DRAW SHARPLY CONTRASTING CONCLUSIONS THAT TYPIFY DIVISION IN BEIRUT EDITORIAL COMMENT TODAY. "AN-NAHAR" PRESENTS ACCORD AS HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S. TO PLAY POSITIVE NEW ROLE IN REGION, WHILE "AL-MUHARRIR" PRESENTS IT AS DANGEROUS OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S. TO BALKANIZE ARAB ARAB WORLD AND LIQUIDATE PALESTINIAN CAUSE. PRO-SAUDI "AL-HAYAT" SUPPORTS ACCORD AS FIRST STEP, WHILE GOL-CONNECTED "AL-BAYRAQ", PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHA'RQ", AND PRO-SOVIET PRO-EGYPTIAN "ASH-SHA'B" CALL FOR RENEWED ARAB UNITY WITHOUT TAKING POSITION ON ACCORD. PRO-LIBYAN "AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI", LEFTIST "AS-SAFIR", AND PRO-SOVIET LCP ORGAN "AL-AKHBAR" CALL ON ARABS TO FOIL "GREATEST COMEDY IN HISTORY", WHILE PRO-IRAQI "BEIRUT" CALLS EGYPT'S DESIRE FOR SECRECY "SIGN OF ITS BLATANT UNCLASSIFIED

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NEGLECT OF FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES." END SUMMARY.

2. PRESENTING ACCORD A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S., FOREIGN EDITOR 'ABD AL-KARIM ASUN-NASR OF LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR" WRITES; "SINAI ACCORD IS BEGINNING OF NEW EGYPTIAN-AMERICAN EXPERIMENT IN MIDEAST. INDEED IT IS BEGINNING OF NEW PHASE IN HISTORY OF REGION, JUST LIKE CZECH ARMS DEAL.... NEW AMERICAN ROLE MUST UNDERTAKE TO DEAL WITH ALL ASPECTS OF CONFLICT... AND BUILD BRIDGES OF CONFIDENCE TO ALL PARTIES, AS IT HAS WITH EGYPT. IT WILL BE HARD FOR AMERICA TO PLAY THIS COMPREHENSIVE ROLE SUCCESSFULLY UNLESS IT GRADUALLY ABANDONS ITS SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL.... CAN USG DO THIS ... OR WILL IT STOP WITH ITS FIRST VICTORY?"

3. PRESENTING ACCORD AS DANGEROUS OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S., EDITORIAL DIRECTOR NAYIF SHUBLAQ OF LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR" WRITES: "IF NASSER'S SMASHING OF ARMS MONOPOLY ... IN MID-FIFTIES WAS WINDOW BY WHICH AMERICAN INFLUENCE LEFT REGION, NEW EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI PHASED ACCORD IS LIKELY TO BE DOOR THROUGH WHICH IT RETURNS.... ENTIRE NATION MUST RISE TO CHALLENGE... AND FOIL SETTLEMENTS THAT CANNOT BUT LEAD TO LIQUIDATION OF PALESTINIAN CAUSE, BALKANIZATION OF MIDEAST, AND RETURN OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE."

4. SUPPORTING ACCORD AS FIRST STEP, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR MUHAMMAD 'ANNAN OF CONSERVATIVE PRO-SAUDI "AL-HAYAT" WRITES: "ISRAEL'S NEW WITHDRAWAL FROM SINAI IS EGYPT'S SECOND COERCIVE ACT... BUT NOT THE LAST.... ARABS WILL ACT AGAIN TO COERCE ISRAEL INTO MORE RETREATS FROM ITS POSITIONS RE GOLAN, WEST BANK, AND PALESTINIAN PEOPLE'S LEGITIMATE RIGHTS.... CAIRO'S ABILITY TO COERCE... IS AS MUCH ARAB AS EGYPTIAN, FOR BEHIND EGYPT STAND ARAB POWER."

5. CALLING FOR RENEWED ARAB UNITY ABOVE ALL ELSE, COLUMNIST SA'ID AL NASIR AD-DIN WRITES IN GOL-CONNECTED "AL-BAYRAQ": "DR. KISSINGER'S PRESENT TRIP HAS CREATED SIGNS OF SERIOUS SPLIT IN ARAB RANKS... WE CALL FOR URGENT SUMMIT MEETING, BECAUSE FACE-TO-FACE MEETING OF ARAB LEADERS FOR FRANK DISCUSSIONS... WILL NO DOUBT LEAD TO RESULTS FAVORABLE TO ARAB AND PALESTINIAN CAUSE." PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" AND UNCLASSIFIED

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PRO-SOVIET PRO-EGYPTIAN "ASH-SHA'B" ECHO THESE THOUGHTS.

6. CALLING ON ARAB MASSES TO REVOLT AGAINST PRESIDENT SADAT, CHIEF EDITOR WALID AL-HUSAYNI OF PRO-LIBYAN "AL-KIFAH AL-'ARAB:" WRITES: "EVEN TRUE REJECTIONIST REGIMES... CANNOT HEAL ARAB NATION'S WOUNDED HONOR....NOTHING CAN STOP SADAT FROM CONTINUING HIS PARADE OF TREACHEROUS CONCESSIONS...EXCEPT THE MASSES. MASSES... MUST RETURN

TO THEIR NATIONAL SENSES AND PROCLAIM THEIR REVOLT  
AGAINST GREATEST COMEDY IN HISTORY.... ARAB MASSES MUST  
REVOLT NOW RPT NOW...BECAUSE REVOLT IS ONLY LEGITIMATE  
MEANS LEFT.... HAS SADAT LEFT US ANY OTHER?"

7. SEEKING FORMATION OF ALLIANCE OF REJECTIONIST REGIMES,  
COLUMNIST BILAL AL-HASAN OF LEFTIST "AS-SAFIR" WRITES:  
"ARAB REJECTIONIST POSITIONS"... HAVE ALL REMAINED MERE  
WORDS; THEY HAVE NOT GONE BEYOND TO ACTION....THIS BEING  
SO, ONLY ACT THAT CAN ANSWER CHALLENGES BEING MADE IS TO  
FORM SYRIAN-IRAQI-PALESTINIAN ALLIANCE SUPPORTED BY WIDER  
ARAB ALLIANCE INCLUDING SOUTH YEMEN, LIBYA, AND ALGERIA."

8. URGING ARAB NATIONALISTS TO ATTACK PRO-AMERICAN  
"RIGHTIST REGIMES", COLUMNIST ALBERT FARHAT OF PRO-SOVIET  
COMMUNIST PARTY WEEKLY ORGAN "AL-AKHBAR" WRITES: "ALL ARAB  
NATIONALIST FORCES MUST ACT QUICKLY TO PREVENT CONCLUSION  
OF AGREEMENT OR AT LEAST PREVENT ITS EXTENSION OT OTHER  
FRONTS, AND THEN PROCEED TO STOP DETERIORATION OF ARAB  
POSITION THAT HAS RESULTED FROM EXCESSES OF RIGHTIST  
REGIMES IN TRAVELLING ROAD OF BARGAINING WITH U.S. THIS  
ROAD LEADS ONLY TO RETURN OF FULL AMERICAN DOMINION, LOSS  
OF ARAB TERRITORIES, AND ABANDONMENT OF PALESTINIAN CAUSE."

9. CRITICIZING EGYPT'S DESIRE FOR SECRECY, PRO-IRAQI  
"BEIRUT" WRITES: "ISTAEI'S INSISTENCE ON OPENESS IS SIGN  
LESS OF GOVERNMENT'S WEAKNESS... THAN OF FACT THAT ACCORD  
IS TRULY IN ITS INTEREST. ON OTHER HAND, EGYPTIAN REGIME'S  
INSISTENCE ON SECRECY... IS SIGN OF ITS BLATANT NEGLECT  
OF FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES."  
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